

THE LATEST DIET: IS IT FOR YOU?

It is hard to resist a diet that promises quick weight loss or has a celebrity's support. Diets can deprive your body of needed nutrients and cause disappointment when the weight is gained back. ***Regardless of claims in the latest diet book, the only healthy way to lose weight is by decreasing the amount of total calories in your food and increasing your physical activity.***

You can recognize a fad diet if it recommends:

- ***Magic or Miracle foods***
There are no miracle foods, pills, drops, herbs or secret formulas that can burn or melt away fat.
- ***Large quantities of a specific food***
Eating the same type of food is unrealistic for long term weight control. It is often boring and does not allow for a healthy variety of foods.
- ***Strange food combinations***
Eating foods in certain sequences or combinations will not have any special weight loss benefit.
- ***Rapid weight loss***
A weight loss goal of more than two pounds per week is unrealistic and unhealthy.
- ***No increased physical activity***
Physical activity is important in losing weight and keeping it off.

NUTRITION TIP: The true measure of weight loss success is not in losing the weight. It is in maintaining a healthy weight.

A few of the current fad diets:

High Protein, Low Carbohydrate Diets

Diets that eliminate bread, potatoes, rice and grain products tend to be high in fat, cholesterol and protein. They may appear to work for a while by promoting the loss of water weight, but most people regain the weight after a few months.

Liquid Diet Products

It is difficult to keep off the weight you lose with liquid meal replacements because your food habits have not changed. These diets are usually very low in fruits, vegetables, grains, and dried beans/peas, which are foods that protect against cancer, heart disease, and other health problems.

Miracle Food Diets

"Miracle" food diets include the "grapefruit diet", "rice diet", the "cabbage soup diet" and the "all you can eat fruit diet". These diets are too restrictive to be healthy. They are low in calcium, iron, folic acid and most vitamins. These diets also lack variety and are hard to follow for any length of time.

These diets can be dangerous to your health.

For more information on diets and nutrition contact: The American Dietetic Association's (ADA) nutrition hotline at 1-800-366-1655 or www.eatright.org

Here's what I will do instead of using a fad diet:

- ___ Talk to my dietitian or health care provider about my weight.
- ___ Contact ADA for information about diets.